



Diversity in action



WORKING TOGETHER: Lincoln Training Center, a South El Monte-based nonprofit that places developmentally disabled adults, has secured a contract with CarMax. Pictured at CarMax's Duarte location are, from left, CarMax Operations Manager Wes Barton, Lincoln's James Moore, Director of Communications Casey Richards, Lincoln's Cesar Aragon, Fernando Garcia, supervisor Kathy Kojima and CarMax Location General Manager Darren Newberry.

LEO JARZOMB / STAFF

Lincoln Center provides workers for CarMax sites

BY RODNEY TANAKA
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DUARTE CarMax offices are now being kept clean through a partnership with the Lincoln Training Center.

The South El Monte-based center provides paid training and employment opportunities to about 450 people with developmental and physical disabilities.

About 50 LTC clients and staff members are working at 10 CarMax sites in California and Nevada, said Casey Richards, director of community services for Lincoln Training Center.

The center provides supervised workers for CarMax. Also, some Lincoln clients have been hired as porters and detailers.

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*Casey Richards,
director of community services,
Lincoln Training Center*

community which they might not have been given," Richards said.

Lincoln clients empty the trash, mop the floors and perform other janitorial duties, said Wes Barton, operations manager for CarMax in Duarte.

CarMax is the nation's largest retailer of used automobiles, with 72 stores nationwide, including six sites in the Los Angeles market, he said.

CarMax is building three additional sites in Los Angeles, and Lincoln Training Center will provide maintenance workers for those shops as well, Barton said.

CarMax is big on diversity and supports Lincoln's goal of finding employment for the developmentally disabled.

"CarMax believes in what they do," Barton said of Lincoln Training Center. "That's why we choose to use them exclusively in California for janitorial maintenance. It's important to CarMax to give back to the community, and CarMax gets the benefits of it, too."

A small group of parents started the center in 1964 to give the developmentally disabled job skills and an improved quality of life.

Lincoln finances its operations through state funding, fundraisers and money from government and community contracts.

A company that hires at least three Lincoln clients does not have to pay workers' compensation, vacation pay and bonuses. Lincoln covers those expenses.

A Lincoln Center staff supervisor also provides training and ensures quality to those working off site.

"We try to build successful employment partnerships with businesses," said Caron Nunez, president of Lincoln Training Center.

More than 70 percent of people with disabilities are unemployed in the U.S., she said.

"What we appreciate about CarMax is they are committed to diversity," Nunez said.

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